those few beginners who could manage it: and if the pupil has but a very limited time (which is the case with the great majority of those for whom elementary drawing is desirable), all is consumed in what is of no practical use, unless he goes much further. The brief period of instruction which can generally be afforded had better be restricted to the rude but intelligible imitation of such realities as can be thoroughly understood, and intelligibly imitated by such a pupil, and are of direct use. By commencing in a general and practical way, all the faculties, the hand and the eye get a little equable training together; they learn to work together. Six lessons on this plan would be of some practical use; and a twelvemonth's instruction, twice a week, would be of real service to every artisan: whereas, the same time spent in lines and mathematical figures alone would be of very small service to the workman.

When rude, clumsy representation will suffice, and there is not time for anything higher (which must be the case with nine-tenths of the people), give that power, and do not try to make a foundation when there is not time to construct even a cellar. A straw hut is better than an incipient palace.*

## THE CRYPT OF GERRARD'S HALL, BASING-LANE, CITY.

At a time when London merchants were not so numerous as at the present day, and when strength of hand and strength of walls were necessary to guard their goods and honest gains, it is recorded that in A.D. 1244 and 1245 Johan Gysors filled the office of lord mayor of London; in 1259 John Gysors, and in 1311 Joban Guysors filled the same important office. These names, although different in the spelling, refer no doubt to members of the same family, who with honour and dignity served the chief office of magistracy of London at the remote period alluded to, and are said to have erected a building on this spot, which most likely served as a residence and warehouse for the then scarce and valuable goods imported at intervals from the East. To this purpose it was applied for several centuries, and eventually was transformed into a hostelry. The beauty of proportion and careful construction of this crypt induce many of the present day to doubt if it was ever intended for other than ecclesiastical purposes: but we have no tradition of its being so used; and it must be remembered that this edifice was erected by a wealthy London merchant, at a time when English architects were remarkable for purity of design and decoration, which was undoubtedly applied to buildings intended for both religious and domestic purposes. In course of time the name of this hall has become changed from Gisors' to Gerrard's Hall—by no means a greater alteration than has happened to many places adjoining. Before the fire of London this ancient structure would undoubtedly possess many of its original features, and would even, when old buildings were more numerous than now, present an appearance which would attract attention. Here, as in connection with other old places, a tradition is attached which became more and more remarkable as time rolled on. In the days of Stowe it was by many believed that Gerrard's Hall was formerly the habitation of a giant, who used a pole in the wars 40 feet long and 15 inches round, and whose skull being found would hold five pecks, and that his thigh bone was 6 feet long; and one of his teeth weighed ten pounds Troy. Respecting this staff, which was probably the parish may-pole, Stowe says: "On the south side of this lane is one great house of old time, builded upon arched vaults, and with arched gate of stone brought from Cane, in Normandy. The same is now a common ostery, for receit of travellers, commonly and corruptly called Gerrard's Hall, of a giant said to have dwelled there. In the high roofed hall of this house sometime stoud a large firepole, which reached to the roof thereof, and by some said to be one of the staves used by Gerrard in the warres, near which there stood also a ladder of the same length, which (as they said) served to ascend to the top of the staffe. Of later years this hall is altered in building, and divers rooms are made in it; notwithstanding the pole is removed to one corner of the hall, and the ladder hanged broken upon a wall of the yard, the boother of that house said to me the pole lacked half a foot of 40 feet in length. I measured the circumference, and found it 15 inches. Reason of the pole could the master of the hostlery give me none, but bade me read the great Chronicles, for there he heard of it." "This," continues the honest historian, "seemed to me insufficient, for he meant the description of Britain, for the most part drawne out of John Leyland (*borrowed of myself*), and placed before 'Reyne Wolf's Chronicle.'" The Great Fire of 1666 destroyed all the ancient "ostery," except the crypt, and about 8 or 9 feet of the wall at the part next the stable yard. The Basing-lane front was built soon after the fire, and presented no remarkable feature, except the effigy of Gerrard, the giant, which was until the last few days stationed in a niche above the entrance. This figure may be the work of the same artist who carved Gog and Magog, in Guildhall. The crypt, which is one of the few remains in London of the architecture of the thirteenth century, has a modern entrance in the passage of the tavern. The original doorway is in Basing-lane. On the left wall of the steps leading to the crypt are several merchants' brands cut in the wall, a cross of Calvary, and a portion of an unfinished legend in black letter. The adjoining engraving is a copy, on a reduced scale, of a selection from them. The crypt, notwithstanding its great antiquity, is so remarkably perfect, and so elegant and picturesque, that its demolition, if unavoidable, cannot fail to be regretted hereafter. The crypt is formed by six centre and eleven side columns and arches of Caen stone; the roof is beautifully filled in with small squares of chalk. The side columns, as will be seen by referring to engravings, are much narrower than the centre ones, and have been worked in oblong stones, a portion of which is inserted in the wall: at the south-west corner of the crypt is a window and door, of about the date of the fifteenth century, which look into an arched chamber adjoining the vaults of the church of St. Mildred. During the occupation of Gerrard's Hall by Mr. Younghusband the crypt was used as a wine cellar; it has now been entirely cleared out, and 3 or 4 feet of rubbish taken away by direction of Mr. Bunning, the city architect, who has, since our drawing was taken, also opened the original windows, and enabled the curious to take a last peep at this interesting relic. The crypt is in the line of the new street from the Monument to St. Paul's. Mr. Bunning was anxious to save it, but by what he now says we fear he finds it impossible to do so.

* To be continued.

## THE NEW DEPARTMENT OF PRACTICAL ART.

The superintendents of the Government Department of Practical Art, Messrs. Cole and Redgrave, have addressed a letter to the new President of the Board of Trade (Mr. Henley, M.P.) on the duties of the "Department of Practical Art," lately established; and the Board of Trade have directed that the same should be communicated to the managing committees of the local branch schools of design for their information.

The art-superintendents, in this initiative letter, submit that a leading principle of its future management should be the endeavour to make the department, as far as practicable, self-supporting in all its branches.

On the subject of "elementary instruction in drawing and modelling"—the education of the eye and hand—they say, as we have often said, that drawing, being in fact an indispensable branch of good general education, if mechanics' institutes, schools in connection with the Committee of Privy Council for Education, and other educational institutions for various classes of the community, were to extend elementary instruction in the knowledge of form, a certain amount of such elementary training might also usefully be given in the schools of design without necessarily creating a separate institution for the purpose. That the successful establishment of elementary schools, however, is the only sure basis in founding future schools of design, or higher schools of ornamental art, and that the extension of such elementary schools may become a very important branch of this new department; for that, unless the public itself, as consumers, are sufficiently educated to appreciate improved art in manufactures, it will not be the interest of manufacturers to aim at its production, and the labours of this department must be in some measure fruitless.

On the subject of higher instruction in ornamental art, the art superintendents present a table, showing, for the first time, the general statistics of the schools of design; and very curious these are.

They recommend a decrease of central and an increase of local authority in the management of the provincial schools of design, the influence of which the local managers might extend, especially by connecting elementary schools with them. The number of schools of design or branch schools for ornamental art, supported by the Government grant system, they think, has reached its extreme limits, but it is not intended to act strictly on this conclusion in the grants of next year. To promote self-reliance and increase local interest, they recommend moderate local taxation in connection with that for art-museums, with which the schools of design should be associated.

Attention is then pointed to the development of the third or highest division of the new department, namely, that of the "practical improvement of manufactures," or the practical application of the artistic powers acquired by the pupil to the exigencies of manufacture by a study of the various processes of manufacture and the practice of design for individual branches of industry, and of decorative art in its various branches.

The first step towards this, they remark, is to place before the student fine examples of what has been already accomplished in his art, and to instruct him in their principles, their beauties, and their imperfections. The formation of classes of competent students for actual practice is suggested; and in organising these, it is recommended that deference should be paid to the practical experience of manufacturers, and pains taken to induce them to contribute their indispensable practical knowledge to aid the development of this branch of the institution.

The Works engaged in by the Viceroy of Egypt.—The present Viceroy has spent 70,000*l.* in making a carriage-road across the Desert to Suez, and large sums in improving the Nile navigation. His new undertaking, the construction of a railroad from Alexandria to Cairo, will, it is said, probably cost a million sterling. The works are progressing rapidly: nearly 14 miles of the embankments have been completed, and about 10,000 men are at present employed along the line. It is probable the Pacha will insist on a distribution of the labour along the entire distance, as he is desirous Cairo should equally share with Alexandria the advantage of early communication with the interior. Through the Delta to Bennah, and thence to Cairo, a distance of about 70 miles, the labour required in formation will be comparatively light, owing to the existence of a well-formed macadamized road for most of the way, and a great portion of which, with slight alterations, will serve to lay the "permanent way" on. The works are being pressed on with great vigour, and 3,000 men, drafted from the ships of war in harbour (which have been laid up), have been sent to aid in and to hasten their completion.

British Museum.—The annual accounts have been printed by order of the Commons. The estimate for year ending 31st March, 1853, is 52,343*l.* The sum granted for the year expiring was 46,824*l.* In course of last year the number of readers to the reading-rooms was 78,419,—on an average 269 per diem. Each reader had consulted on an average five vols. per diem.

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